



Ravalli County Aviation Safety Foundation, Inc.

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Ravalli County Commissioners

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February 13, 2009

Board of County Commissioners
Ravalli County
215 South 4th Street, Suite A
Hamilton, MT 59840

Dear Commissioners:

The Board of Directors of the Ravalli County Aviation Safety Foundation read with surprise in a recent *Ravalli Republic* Valley Viewpoint column that "local pilots and airport hangar owners" (we assume you meant the Ravalli County Aviation Safety Foundation) would help pay the local match for Alternative 3 outlined in the Environmental Assessment. We wish to clear up any misunderstanding of our financial participation in funding safety improvements at our community airport.

We unanimously support only Alternative 4, which proposes to move the main runway 400 feet east and 600 feet north of its present position. We would support a phased plan for ultimate construction of a 5,200-foot length runway, with immediate construction of 4,200 feet of pavement plus safety overruns of 500 feet on each end of the runway. The Airport Layout Plan would continue to show an eventual 5,200-foot runway, as it does right now. Land purchases made over the next few years would protect the area around the airport from residential development and aviation obstructions.

We support Alternative 4 for the following reasons, as previously discussed on the fact sheets we distributed at the meeting on February 4, 2009:

- 1) Maintaining or improving airport financial self-sustainability for operations;
- 2) Stimulating the local economy with federal funding assistance;
- 3) Ensuring future federal funding assistance for airport maintenance projects;
- 4) Improving runway traffic separation for safety and noise reduction;
- 5) Allowing faster response for wildland fire suppression;
- 6) Continuing availability of timely emergency medical transportation;
- 7) Enhancing opportunities to celebrate our cultural heritage;
- 8) Filling a need for meeting space and youth activities;
- 9) Maintaining open space on the valley floor;
- 10) Creating access to allow public enjoyment of our history and views.

If we can provide any further information for your consideration, or answer questions about the possibility of our financial assistance in making these safety improvements a reality, we will be happy to visit with you.

Sincerely,

Doug McLaren
President